

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:858

ANSWERED ON:01.03.2016

Use of Dangerous Chemicals in Cultivation of Fruits and Vegetables

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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are reports that some dangerous chemicals have been used for increasing the weight and size of fruits and vegetables;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to detect and check the use of harmful chemicals in the cultivation of fruits and vegetables?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a) & (b): Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare is implementing a program for "Monitoring of Pesticide Residues at National Level" (MPRNL) under which samples of vegetable and fruits are collected and analyzed for the presence of pesticide residues. The annual report of MPRNL for 2014-15 shows that 1.78% and 2.88% samples of all the fruits and vegetables analysed respectively contained pesticide residues above the Maximum Residues Limits fixed by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). To prevent use of harmful colours and chemicals on fruits and vegetables, provision has been made in the sub-regulation 2.3.6 of Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and restrictions on sales) Regulations – 2011 by which

'The Fresh Fruits and Vegetables shall be free from rotting and free from coating of waxes, mineral oil and colours. Provided that fresh fruits may be coated with bees wax (white and yellow) or carnauba wax or shellac wax at level not exceeding Good Manufacturing Practices under proper label declaration as provided in Regulation 2.4.5 (44) of Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) regulations, 2011'.

Further, Pesticides are registered by the Registration Committee constituted under the provision of the Insecticides Act, 1968, only after establishing safety to human, animal and environmental health. Technical reviews are carried out from time to time and continued use of pesticides is permitted only if such pest control chemicals are found safe.

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(c): Violation of conditions laid out under the said Regulations, attract penal action under Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006. Enforcement of the provisions of the Act and Regulations is primarily the responsibility of States/ UTs. The annual reports of the MPRNL are being shared with all State Government to help. In addition , the Central Govt. through Central Integrated Pest Management Centres of Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage as well as State Departments of Agriculture conduct Farmers Field Schools and awareness campaigns to sensitize farmers regarding safe and judicious use of pesticides, use of bio-pesticides/ bio-fertilizers etc.

A 'Grow Safe Food' campaign has been initiated to carry the message of safe and judicious use of pesticides to farmers and other stakeholders.
